

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9714

SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE

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USCINCEUR

DA

C O N F I D E N T I A L OSLO 1979

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, BEXP, NO, NATO, FR

SUBJECT: SNAG IN NORWEGIAN ACQUISITION OF ROLAND II

REFS: (A) SECDEF 302044Z APRIL 1975

(B) OSLO 1717

(C) DA 041857Z FEB 75

(D) OSLO 265

(E) CHMAAG NORWAY 101420Z JAN 75

SUMMARY: GOVERNMENT PROPOSAL FOR NORWAY TO ACQUIRE THE
SU VERSION OF ROLAND II SHORAD SYSTEM, PRESENTLY BEFORE
DEFENSE COMMITTEE OF NORWEGIAN PARLIAMENT, HAS RUN INTO
SERIOUS SNAG AS A RESULT OF FRENCH INSISTENCE THAT US
DOES NOT HAVE THE RIGHT TO SEEL ROLAND II IN NORWAY.
END SUMMARY.

1. UNDERSECRETARY OF MINISTRY OF DEFENSE (AASLAND)
INFORMED US MAY 15 THAT FRENCH AMBASSADOR PRESENTED
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DEFENSE MINISTER FOSTERVOLL WITH LETTER FROM FRENCH

MINISTER OF DEFENSE STATING THAT US HAD NO RIGHT TO SELL ROLAND II IN NORWAY. FRENCH AMBASSADOR REPORTEDLY ALSO RAISED CROTALE QUESTION AND URGED A CLEARING OF THE AIR THROUGH STATEMENTS IN MEDIA THAT NEITHER FRANCE NOR CROTALE HAS ANY CONNECTION WITH SOUTH AFRICA. (CABINET DECISION FAVORING ROLAND II AND EARLIER FRENCH DEMARCHE WERE REPORTED IN PARA 5 OF REF B.) AASLAND ADVISED US THAT NORWEGIAN GOVERNMENT NOW HAS TWO OPTIONS: (A) WITHDRAW THE PROPOSAL NOW BEFORE THE PARLIAMENT (B) ATTACH LOWER PRIORITY TO PROPOSAL PENDING ASSURANCES FROM USG THAT NORWAY WILL BE ABLE TO ACQUIRE US VERSION OF ROLAND II. DEADLINE FOR SUCH ASSURANCES TO SECURE PARLIAMENTARY ENDORSEMENT THIS SESSION IS MAY 31.

2. INFORMATION CONTAINED IN PARA 8 OF REF C -- USG LICENSING AGREEMENT REQUIRES FRENCH AND GERMAN APPROVAL FOR THIRD COUNTRY SALES -- WAS COMMUNICATED TO MINISTRY OF DEFENSE ON RECEIPT. NONETHELESS, NORWEGIANS HAVE DISTINCT IMPRESSION THAT THIRD COUNTRY SALES ASPECT IS BEING RESOLVED BY US. SECDEF CONVERSATION WITH FOSTERVOLL MARCH 24 MAY HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO NORWEGIAN MISUNDERSTANDING (SEE PARA 2 OF MEMCON FROM MARCH 24 MEETING). UNDERSECRETARY OF DEFENSE AASLAND REFERRED TO THIS DISCUSSION.

3. NORWEGIAN PROPOSAL BEFORE PARLIAMENT DEFENSE COMMITTEE ESTIMATES TOTAL INVESTMENT COST AT AROUND 580 MILLION KRONER WITH INITIAL DELIVERY TO COMMENCE IN 1979. FAILURE OF PARLIAMENT TO CONSIDER GOVERNMENT PROPOSAL DURING PRESENT SESSION WOULD RESULT IN NO APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS AND POSTPONEMENT OF PARLIAMENTARY CONSIDERATION UNTIL NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1975 AT THE VERY EARLIEST. THIS DELAY WOULD NO DOUBT BE FULLY EXPLOITED BY FRENCH IN NEW PUSH FOR CROTALE MISSILE SALE HERE, ALTHOUGH IT IS OUR VIEW THAT POLITICAL LIABILITIES AND PAST HISTORY OF CROTALE AFFAIR POSE INSURMOUNTABLE OBSTACLES AND THAT CROTALE WILL STAY BURIED. FINALLY, FOSTERVOLL WILL BE SEVERELY EMBARRASSED IF, AFTER ANNOUNCING GOVERNMENT DECISION TO ACQUIRE ROLAND II, CONFIDENTIAL

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HE MUST NOW INFORM HIS CABINET COLLEAGUES AND PARLIAMENT THAT NORWAY DOES NOT HAVE THE RIGHT TO PURCHASE US VERSION.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: WE WOULD APPRECIATE URGENT GUIDANCE FOR AASLAND ON (A) WHETHER OR NOT US HAS, IS IN THE PROCESS OF OR CONTEMPLATES SEEKING FRENCH/GERMAN APPROVAL FOR SALE OF US VERSION OF ROLAND II

TO NORWAY AS WELL AS ESTIMATE OF TIME FRAME FOR RECEIVING
RESPONSE IN VIEW OF MAY 31 DEADLINE AND (B) WHAT COURSE
OF ACTION WOULD BE IN OUR BEST INTERESTS TO RECOMMEND
TO THE NORWEGIANS IF, AS APPEARS LIKELY, FRENCH APPROVAL
IS NOT FORTHCOMING.

BYRNE

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